

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 396

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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TAGS: PFOR MO FR

SUBJECT: KING HASSAN'S INTERVIEWS WITH FRENCH MEDIA PRIOR
TO NOV. 22-25 VISIT TO FRANCE

REF: (A) RABAT 6266, (B) RABAT 6299, (C) RABAT 6303, (D) RABAT
6336 (E) RABAT 6344

1. IN A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS AND PRESS CONFERENCES GIVEN BY
KING HASSAN ON THE EVE OF HIS NOVEMBER 22-25 STATE VISIT TO
FRANCE, HE TOUCHED ON A WIDE RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL AND INTERNAL
ISSUES. HIS COMMENTS ON A U.S. VISIT, THE SAUDI MEDIATION EFFORT,
PHOSPHATES AND OPEC PRICE HIKE ARE REPORTED REFTELS.
HIGHLIGHTS OF HIS REMARKS ON OTHER SUBJECTS FOLLOW:

2. NUCLEAR REACTOR: THE KING SAID HE WOULD TALK TO GISCARD
ABOUT PURCHASING A NUCLEAR REACTOR. MOROCCO INTENDED TO INITIATE
"SERIOUS STUDIES" ON THE SUBJECT AFTER THE FIRST OF THE YEAR.

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THE HIGH PRICE OF GENERATING ELECTRICITY IN MOROCCO WAS

AFFECTING ITS AMBITIOUS INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS. SINCE MOROCCO, AS A RESULT OF ITS PLANS TO PROCESS URANIUM FROM PHOSPHATE, WOULD BECOME ONE OF THE LEADING URANIUM PRODUCERS IN COMING YEARS, IT WOULD BE "STUPID" NOT TO EMPLOY THAT URANIUM. IF THE FRENCH DID NOT PROVIDE GOOD TERMS FOR THE REACTOR, MOROCCO WOULD LOOK ELSEWHERE. ASKED IN ONE INTERVIEW ABOUT HIS TIMING GIVEN CURRENT U.S. EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN OVER NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, THE KING REPLIED, "EXACTLY; I WANTED TO THROW THIS MONKEYWRENCH AGAINST THE WINDOW." HE THEN SOUGHT TO EXPLAIN HIMSELF BY CITING A FORMER BRITISH POLITICAN WHO ONCE SAID THAT WHEN THINGS WERE "A LITTLE TOO CALM" HE WISHED HE COULD THROW A MONKEYWRENCH THROUGH THE WINDOW TO HEAR THE NOISE AND SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN. IN ANY CASE, KING REITERATED STRONGLY, MOROCCO WOULD NEVER MAKE AN ATOMIC BOMB.

3. FRANCO-MOROCCAN RELATIONS. THE MAJOR THRUST OF THE KING'S REMARKS WAS TO UNDERSCORE THE THEME OF CLOSENESS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, HE WENT OUT OF HIS WAY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO SIGNAL HIS CONCERN OVER THE QUALITATIVE LEVEL OF FRENCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. HE CRITICIZED THE TEACHERS WHICH FRANCE HAD BEEN SENDING, INCLUDING THEIR ABILITY TO SPEAK THE FRENCH LANGUAGE PROPERLY. HE WOULD RAISE THIS DURING HIS VISIT.

4. THE SAHARA. KING REITERATED THAT HE WAS READY FOR A NEW CONSULTATION IN THE SAHARA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DECEMBER 1975 UNGA RESOLUTION, ALTHOUGH HE MAINTAINED THAT THE FEBRUARY 26 JEMAA MEETING AND THE RECENT MUNICIPAL/RURAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS HAD CONSTITUTED SUCH A CONSULTATION. A PROPER CENSUS OF SAHARANS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONDUCTED AND ALGERIAN-BACKED INCURSIONS STOPPED FOR A FURTHER CONSULTATION TO OCCUR. HE EXPRESSED CERTAINTY, HOWEVER, THAT ALGERIA WOULD NEVER BUY SUCH AN IDEA. ELSEWHERE, HE SAID THE SITUATION WAS "IN HAND" IN THE SAHARA NOW THAT MOROCCAN FORCES HAD ADAPTED TO GUERRILLA WARFARE TACTICS IN THE DESERT.

5. INTERNAL POLITICS. HE SPECIFIED FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD IN MARCH, IN TIME FOR THE NEWLY ELECTED PARLIAMENT TO SIT THE SECOND FRIDAY IN APRIL. HE DENIED THAT HE WAS AGAINST THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND ALLUDED TO THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE DAYS. HE BRIDLED SOMEWHAT AT QUESTIONS CONCERNING GOVERNMENT REPRESSION, CENSORSHIP, AND POLITICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRISONERS, INVITING JOURNALISTS TO SEE ANY OPPOSITION POLITICIAN THEY WISHED WITHOUT FEAR. THE RIGHT TO STRIKE, FOR EXAMPLE, EXISTED IN MOROCCO. HE CLAIMED THAT THERE WERE NO POLITICAL PRISONERS, ONLY SOME "OUTLAWS". HE ALSO STATED THAT CENSORSHIP HAD BEEN EXERCISED ONLY WITH RESPECT TO ALGERIA SO AS TO KEEP EMOTIONS DOWN AND THAT IT WAS NOW NO LONGER BEING USED FOR INTERNAL MATTERS.

6. KING'S HEALTH. KING RESPONDED TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STATE OF HIS HEALTH THAT IT WAS FINE. HE CHALLENGED ONE JOURNALIST TO A 100 METER DAHS TO PROVE IT.

7. ANGOLA. HE SINGLED OUT THE RISK WHICH "PHYSICAL" INTERVENTION POSED, IN THAT IT CREATED EXTREMELY DANGEROUS PRECEDENTS IN ALL HOT SPOTS OF THE WORLD, NOT ONLY AFRICA. HE OBSERVED THAT THE CUBAN INTERVENTION, FOR EXAMPLE, COULD SERVE TO JUSTIFY SIMILAR OR COUNTER INTERVENTIONS ELSEWHERE.

8. TERRORISM: KING SAID HE CONTINUED TO CONDEMN ARAB TERRORISM. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT HIS PLO FRIENDS WERE INNOCENT OF TERRORISM DESPITE MUCH OF THE WORLD'S BELIEF TO THE CONTRARY. AIRPLANE HIJACKINGS HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT BY A "COVERT WING" OF THE PLO.

9. MOROCCAN JEWS: HE REAFFIRMED HIS GOVERNMENT'S FREQUENT CALLS OF LATE FOR THE RETURN OF MOROCCAN JEWS FROM ABROAD, AND PRAISED THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO MOROCCAN CULTURE AND ECONOMY. HE PROMISED THEM COMPLETE INTEGRATION INTO MOROCCAN SOCIETY.
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